

1. God is Love.
 - a. God's love is unconditional.
 - i. Nothing can separate us from the love of God.
 - ii. [Romans 8:35-39](#) "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall **tribulation**, or **distress**, or **persecution**, or **famine**, or **nakedness**, or **danger**, or **sword**? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither **death** nor **life**, nor **angels** nor **rulers**, nor **things present** nor **things to come**, nor **powers**, nor **height** nor **depth**, nor **anything else in all creation**, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."
 - iii. We only know love (and how to love) because God loves us.
 - iv. [1 John 4:16-21](#) "So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever **abides** in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have **confidence** for the **day of judgment**, because as he is so also are we in this world. There is **no fear** in love, but **perfect love casts out fear**. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother."
 - v. John uses (writes) the word "love" (agape) 27 times in verses 7-21.
 - vi. It is easy to see how important love is in God's eyes.
 - b. Paul rebukes the church at Corinth with one of the most famous chapters in the Bible.
 - i. [1 Corinthians 12:27-31](#) "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way."
 - ii. Then Paul starts to describe love through illustrations and definitions.
 - iii. [1 Corinthians 13:13](#) "So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love."
 - iv. The beginning of chapter 4:1 is "Pursue love."
 - c. God's love is unconditional. His promises are not.
 - i. "Those who love God."
 - ii. Whatever follows these words from God is only for those who love God.
 - iii. [Romans 8:28](#) "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."
2. For good
 - a. All things work together for good.
 - i. The context of verse 28 is suffering.

- ii. [Romans 8:17-18](#) "and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."
- iii. Paul talks about groanings, hope, weakness, and the Spirit interceding for us in verses 17-27.
- iv. Then he says, "all things," meaning all that we suffer through, our groanings, and our prayers (even when the Spirit had to intercede for us because we did not know how to pray), work together for our good.
- v. This is a challenging text, especially when we have suffered a loss or tragedy.
 - 1. We don't want to hear that the loss works for our good!
 - 2. We don't want to hear that whatever catastrophe we suffer through works for our good!
 - 3. We are comfortable in our suffering; we want to be angry and project that anger on the nearest object or person.
 - 4. The truth is that all our suffering works for our good.
 - 5. [James 1:2-4](#) "Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces **steadfastness**. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be **perfect** and **complete, lacking in nothing**."
- b. This is the hard truth we don't want to hear; our suffering matures us as Christians.
 - i. We grow in empathy, compassion, and love through our suffering.
 - ii. [2 Corinthians 1:3-6](#) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer."
 - iii. The beautiful thing is that God is there with us, comforting us in every bit of suffering we endure (for those who love God)!
 - iv. God tells us nine times in four verses that He comforts us, and we comfort others.
 - v. We should wear our suffering as a badge of honor, "I was able to suffer for Christ."
 - vi. But, too often, we hide our suffering; we are ashamed of it, thinking it is weakness.
 - vii. Suffering for Christ is a strength!
- c. Joseph's suffering was hard.
 - i. He was hated by his brothers and thrown into a well
 - ii. His brothers wanted to kill him, but Reuben intervened, and they sold him to slavers.
 - iii. He was propositioned by his master's wife and imprisoned for it.
 - iv. He endured suffering for 13 years, from when he was sold into slavery until released from prison.
 - v. [Genesis 50:19-21](#) "But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it

about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them."

- d. "For those who love God, all things work together for good."
- 3. His purpose.
 - a. [Romans 8:28](#) "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."
 - b. What is God's purpose?
 - i. The easy answer is that God has two eternal purposes: for all people to be saved and for the saved to become more like His Son.
 - 1. Jesus said He came to seek and save the lost; [Luke 19:10](#) "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.""
 - 2. God wants all people to be saved; [1 Timothy 2:3-4](#) "This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."
 - 3. [Romans 8:29](#) "For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers."
 - ii. God's will becomes more demanding when we understand we have been entrusted with the Gospel to share it with others.
 - 1. [2 Timothy 2:2](#) "and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also."
 - 2. God has given us the Gospel to guard, protect, and share.
 - iii. It is also daunting when we understand what it looks like to be transformed into the image of His Son.
 - 1. [Romans 12:1-2](#) "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."
 - 2. [1 Thessalonians 5:16-22](#) "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil."
 - 3. [1 Peter 2:13-17](#) "Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor."
 - c. God's purpose is for all mankind to be saved and for the saved to become more like His Son, Jesus.
- 4. All Things.

- a. God's love is unconditional.
- b. God's promise is conditional on our love for Him.
- c. His promise to those who love Him is that everything that happens in your life, good and bad, work together to grow and mature you into the person God desires you to be.